110TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION
S. 1246

To establish and maintain a wildlife global animal information network for surveillance internationally to combat the growing threat of emerging diseases that involve wild animals, such as bird flu, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 26, 2007

Mr. LIEBERMAN (for himself, Mr. BROWNBACK, and Mr. AKAKA) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

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A BILL

To establish and maintain a wildlife global animal information network for surveillance internationally to combat the growing threat of emerging diseases that involve wild animals, such as bird flu, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*

2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the "Wildlife Global Animal

5 Information Network for Surveillance Act" or "Wildlife

6 GAINS Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that—

(1) the ongoing panzootic of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) strain H5N1 in Asia and Eurasia is a threat to global human health and the global poultry industry;

(2) the HPAI virus is capable of causing massive avian die-offs, and response can easily involve the culling of tens of millions of domestic poultry or domestic waterfowl, resulting in significant economic losses;

(3) the fatality rate due to infection in humans may be 30 to 50 percent or more;

(4) it has long been known that wild birds are a reservoir host for avian influenza viruses worldwide;

(5) the 1918 pandemic, the most lethal of the three pandemics that killed over 40,000,000 people worldwide, was caused by an influenza virus that initially jumped directly from birds to humans and subsequently evolved an ability to transmit from human-to-human;

(6) this precedent for an avian influenza virus to transmit directly from birds to humans, then spread among humans, significantly raises the concern about the current H5N1 influenza strain;

3

1   (7) increased surveillance, including on migra-
2   tory birds, is critical to controlling avian influenza
3   and preparing for other potential emerging infec-
4   tious diseases;

5   (8) the capacity to proactively detect the
6   threats could result in significantly improved disease
7   prediction and prevention capabilities;

8   (9) international wildlife health surveillance
9   does not clearly fall under the jurisdiction of any
10 Federal or international agency;

11   (10) there is a continued inability to share real-
12 time data across the human, agricultural, wildlife,
13 and veterinary agencies on zoonotic threats;

14   (11) while surveillance at domestic poultry and
15 domestic waterfowl production facilities and farms is
16 an immediate and on-going monitoring need and is
17 being supported through relevant agencies, surveil-
18 lance in wild bird populations that may have been
19 exposed to the virus is a critical component to deter-
20 mine the spread of the virus, implement control
21 measures, and protect human, livestock, and wildlife
22 health;

23   (12) monitoring and surveillance of wild migra-
24 tory and resident water birds are critically important
25 to identifying all strains of influenza viruses in wild

1 birds as a library of possible genotypes, determining

2 their role in the spread of the virus, and anticipating

3 where outbreaks may occur to enhance preparedness;

4 (13) improving surveillance of wildlife health

5 around the world would close significant jurisdic-

6 tional and scientific gaps in current emerging infec-

7 tious disease preparedness;

8 (14) other emerging diseases beyond bird flu

9 merit similar attention, in terms of the potential

10 threats to global public health as well as

11 agribiosecurity and biodiversity;

12 (15) the majority of emerging infectious dis-

13 eases identified in the past several decades have

14 moved from wildlife to humans, largely due to

15 human incursions into or alterations of wildlife habi-

16 tats and hunting, consumption, and trade of wildlife

17 species;

18 (16) the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)

19 virus moved from chimpanzees to humans via these

20 mechanisms;

21 (17) many factors contribute to disease emer-

22 gence and spread from wildlife to domestic animals

23 and humans, including environmental degradation

24 and the handling, consumption, and trade of wildlife

25 and wildlife-derived products;

1   (18) from avian influenza to the severe acute

2 respiratory syndrome (SARS), from bovine tuber-

3 culosis to the Ebola virus, and from HIV/AIDS to

4 monkey pox, a long list of zoonotic diseases nega-

5 tively impacts people's lives and livelihoods and costs

6 the global economy billions of dollars; and

7   (19) the Government of the United States lacks

8 a comprehensive program to monitor wildlife health

9 around the world, a program that could proactively

10 inform preparedness not just in the case of a poten-

11 tial H5N1 influenza strain pandemic, but also for a

12 broader array of emerging infectious disease threats

13 that often arise at the interface between wildlife, hu-

14 mans, and their domestic animals.

15 **SEC. 3. PURPOSES.**

16   The purposes of this Act are to establish and main-

17 tain a Wildlife Global Animal Information Network for

18 Surveillance—

19   (1) to more rapidly and efficiently detect,

20 verify, and report on the presence of infectious dis-

21 eases, such as highly pathogenic avian influenza, in

22 birds and other wildlife around the world;

23   (2) to use information on pathogens found dur-

24 ing surveillance of wildlife to better delineate poten-

1 tial threats to domestic animals, humans, as well as

2 wildlife itself;

3   (3) to use information on when and where

4 HPAI and other pathogens of concern are identified

5 in wildlife—

6   (A) to better guide preparedness in the

7 United States and around the world; and

8   (B) to carry out a strategic wildlife health

9 surveillance initiative that will provide regions,

10 countries, and specific locations with early

11 warning information that will help target re-

12 sources toward enhancement of agribiosecurity,

13 surveillance, public health vigilance, and related

14 areas;

15   (4) to create an open access database within

16 which information on HPAI and other pathogens of

17 interest identified in wild birds and other wildlife

18 can be shared as close to real time as possible;

19   (5) to protect the health and safety of United

20 States citizens and officials traveling or living

21 abroad; and

22   (6) to protect the economic interests of the

23 United States and its partners from threats to

24 health, agriculture, and natural resources, including

25 wildlife itself.

1 **SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.**

2 In this Act:

3 (1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term "Adminis-

4 trator" means the Administrator of the United

5 States Agency for International Development, acting

6 through one or more eligible organizations.

7 (2) ELIGIBLE ORGANIZATION.—The term "eligi-

8 ble organization" means an organization chartered

9 in the United States with—

10 (A) extensive global wildlife health experi-

11 ence in tracking disease in wild birds and other

12 wildlife, including free-ranging, captive, and

13 wild bird species;

14 (B) proven ability in identifying avian in-

15 fluenza, Ebola virus, and other pathogens in

16 wild birds or other wildlife;

17 (C) experience managing and implementing

18 similar wildlife surveillance activities; and

19 (D) accredited zoological facilities in the

20 United States.

21 (3) HPAI.—The term "HPAI" means highly

22 pathogenic avian influenza.

23 (4) WILDLIFE GAINS.—The term "Wildlife

24 GAINS" means the Wildlife Global Animal Informa-

25 tion Network for Surveillance established under sec-

26 tion 5(a).

1   (5) WILDLIFE GAINS PARTNERS.—The term

2 "Wildlife GAINS partners" means the partners of

3 the Wildlife GAINS described in section 5(b).

SEC. 5. WILDLIFE GLOBAL ANIMAL INFORMATION NET-

WORK FOR SURVEILLANCE.

6   (a) AUTHORIZATION OF ASSISTANCE.—The Adminis-

7 trator, acting through one or more eligible organizations,

8 is authorized to establish and maintain a program to im-

9 plement a Wildlife Global Animal Information Network for

10 Surveillance.

11   (b) PARTNERS.—In administering the Wildlife

12 GAINS, the Administrator shall collaborate with appro-

13 priate—

14   (1) Federal and State agency partners, includ-

15   ing—

16   (A) the Department of Agriculture, acting

17   through—

18   (i) the Agricultural Research Service;

19   and

20   (ii) the Animal and Plant Health In-

21   spection Service;

22   (B) the Department of Health and Human

23   Services, acting through the Centers for Dis-

24   ease Control and Prevention;

25   (C) the Department of Homeland Security;

1   (D) the Department of Defense;

2   (E) the Department of the Interior, acting

3   through—

4   (i) the United States Geological Sur-

5   vey; and

6   (ii) the United States Fish and Wild-

7   life Service; and

8   (F) various State wildlife agencies in the

9   United States;

10   (2) multilateral agency partners, including—

11   (A) the Food and Agriculture Organiza-

12   tion;

13   (B) the World Health Organization;

14   (C) the Office International des Epizooties,

15   the world animal health organization; and

16   (D) the World Conservation Union;

17   (3) conservation organizations with expertise in

18 international and domestic wildlife monitoring and

19 surveillance;

20   (4) accredited colleges of veterinary medicine

21 and medicine; and

22   (5) other national and international partners,

23 as necessary.

24 (c) INTERNATIONAL SURVEILLANCE.—The Adminis-

25 trator shall manage an international surveillance program

1 under which Federal Wildlife GAINS partners shall, and

2 non-Federal Wildlife GAINS partners are encouraged

3 to—

4   (1) monitor and test for the presence or arrival

5 of avian influenza and other significant avian patho-

6 gens at important bird areas around the world and

7 in marketplaces with intense trade in wild birds;

8   (2) monitor and test for the presence or arrival

9 of other significant pathogens in free-ranging wild-

10 life and in places with intense trade in wild animals;

11   (3) use trained professionals to collect samples

12 and other data and send samples to appropriate di-

13 agnostic centers;

14   (4) use the Wildlife GAINS, in partnership with

15 relevant agencies and organizations, for con-

16 ducting—

17   (A) disease surveillance activities on migra-

18 tory birds and other wildlife worldwide;

19   (B) domestic and international field inves-

20 tigations on migratory birds and other wildlife;

21   (C) training and capacity-building activi-

22 ties related to the relationships between human

23 health, domestic animal health, and wildlife

24 health; and

1   (D) research on methods and approaches

2   for detection and enhanced surveillance of

3   HPAI and other pathogens in migratory birds

4   and other wildlife; and

5   (5) send samples for pathogen identification

6   and testing to certified laboratories that—

7   (A) meet internationally established meth-

8   ods standards;

9   (B) are located at—

10   (i) the Centers for Disease Control

11   and Prevention;

12   (ii) the Office International des

13   Epizooties, the world animal health organi-

14   zation;

15   (iii) the Food and Agriculture Organi-

16   zation;

17   (iv) National Veterinary Services Lab-

18   oratories of the Department of Agriculture;

19   (v) the Agricultural Research Service;

20   or

21   (vi) other relevant specialized labora-

22   tories; and

23   (C) report the findings back to the Admin-

24   istrator and Wildlife GAINS partners.

25   (d) NETWORK.—

1   (1) PARTNERS.—The Administrator shall re-
2 quire Federal Wildlife GAINS partners, and encour-
3 age non-Federal Wildlife GAINS partners, to trans-
4 mit to the Administrator information related to glob-
5 al distribution and characteristics of significant
6 pathogens.

7   (2) ADMINISTRATION.—The Administrator
8 shall—

9   (A) use surveillance reports and other for-
10 mal and informal sources of information to
11 identify and investigate local disease outbreaks
12 of avian influenza and other infectious diseases
13 involving wildlife, in coordination with Wildlife
14 GAINS partners;

15   (B) develop a long-term baseline of re-
16 gional data related to HPAI and pathogens in
17 migratory birds and other wildlife for analysis
18 between and across sites to create a system to
19 identify when and where outbreaks might occur
20 and paths of dispersal;

21   (C) provide technical assistance for disease
22 prevention and control programs based on sci-
23 entific understanding of the relationships be-
24 tween wildlife health, domestic animal health,
25 and human health;

1   (D) provide analytical disease findings reg-

2   ularly to the United States Agency for Inter-

3   national Development and other Federal Wild-

4   life GAINS partners to prevent or combat

5   human and animal diseases;

6   (E) conduct other activities as are nec-

7   essary to support the Wildlife GAINS network

8   and Wildlife GAINS partners; and

9   (F) coordinate Wildlife GAINS surveillance

10   results at the headquarters of the eligible orga-

11   nization.

12   (e) DATABASE.—

13   (1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall

14   manage, map, and make available on a database on

15   the Internet all results and information gathered

16   under this Act.

17   (2) REQUIREMENTS.—The database shall—

18   (A) provide geographic data on wildlife

19   populations and the movements of the popu-

20   lations and laboratory test results; and

21   (B) be available for viewing by any Federal

22   agency, foreign country, multilateral institution,

23   organization, or individual.

24   (f) TRAINING.—The Administrator shall request ac-

25 credited colleges of veterinary medicine and medicine and

1 other Wildlife GAINS partners to train members of the

2 Wildlife GAINS network to—

3   (1) monitor important wildlife areas around the

4   world; and

5   (2) test for the presence or arrival of avian in-

6   fluenza and other significant pathogens of zoonotic

7   concern or of concern to domestic or wild animals.

8 **SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

9   There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out

10 this Act $10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2008 through

11 2012.

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